

[Pioneer Reminiscences and Incidents]

Dup.

Form A

Circumstances of Interview

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

OREGON FOLKLORE STUDIES

Name of worker Sara B. Wrenn Date January 13, 1939

Address 505 Elks Building, Portland, Oregon (Project Office).

Subject Project reminiscences.

Name and address of informant Mr. Ernest P. Elliott.

Date and time of interview January 10, 1939[md] Afternoon 1:30 to 2:30.

Place of interview Home of informant, 426 Division St., Oregon City, Oregon.

Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant His son Guy Elliott, a neighbor of the interviewer.

Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you [md]

Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Comfortable, fairly modern two-story house, the living room of which was well furnished and cozy with a quite handsomely appointed

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dining room opening off from it. The house, situated in a first-class neighborhood, is surrounded by the usual small and shrubby-filled yard, with steps leading up from the sidewalk.

Form B

Personal History of Informant

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

OREGON FOLKLORE STUDIES

Name of worker Sara B. Wrenn Date January 13, 1939

Address 506 Elks Building, Portland, Oregon.

Subject Pioneer reminiscences and incidents.

Name and address of informant Mrs Ernest P. Elliott. 426 Division Street, Oregon City, Oregon.

Information obtained should supply the following facts:

1. Ancestry
2. Place and date of birth
3. Family
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates

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6. Occupations and accomplishments with dates

7. Special skills and interests

8. Community and religious activities

9. Description of informant

10. Other points gained in interview

1. Scotch-English.

2. Portland, Oregon, July 6, 1859.

3. Father, F. N. Elliott. Mother, [Abelia?] Cutting Elliott.

4. Always lived in Oregon, most of the time in the vicinity of Oregon City.

5. Public schools [md] three months of country school for several years.

6. Logging and lumbering, and for a number of years in real estate business.

7. Interested generally in public and civic affairs. Chief pleasure, hunting and fishing, and being out in the woods.

8. No church affiliations. Member Woodmen of the World. Used to be member of [Benevolent?] and Protective Order of Elks.

9. Small, dark complexioned, with dark eyes, and of neat appearance. Apparently well-informed on general matters.

Form C

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Text of Interview (Unedited)

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

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Subject Pioneer reminiscences and incidents.

Name and address of informant Mr. Ernest P. Elliott. 426 Division Street, Oregon City, Oregon.

Text:

My grandfather Cutting came to Oregon, in 1846 or '47, first locating on the [Clacksmas?] River, near what is now Park Place. With the discovery of gold in California he got the gold fever, of course, and as soon as he could get ready, started for California, following the road that ran east of here over the hills. It was a mighty poor road, and as he wound slowly along he came out on what was a little valley with a stream running through, and plenty of wood; yet not the heavy timber that covered most of the land thereabout. Here [grandad?] slowed down his oxen. Said he: "This is the place I dreamed about. This looks like heaven to me. Here I'm going to stay. I'm not going to California." He was only about seventeen miles from Oregon City, but had been plodding along for two or three days, so it seemed a lot farther. Grandmother was disappointed. She wanted to go to California. Her little old trunk was at the rear of the wagon. Back she went and climbed up and sat on her truck. "No," [sez?] she, "I'm not going to stay here, I'm going on to Californy," and she pulled her shawl about her and humped her shoulders, as determined-like as you please.

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It looked like a separation in the family right there, but grandad asserted his authority. I guess he thought it was a poor place to divide the wagon and oxen and household goods, let alone the 2 one boy they then had. He got rough. "Get off that trunk and get down," he roared. Grandmother was mad, but she got down. So there they settled, on their 640 acre donation land claim. They called it Meadowbrook. The creek has always been known as Milk Creek. It's out in the [Molalla?] country. He built there one of the first, if not the first, grist mills in the country, with burrs that came around The Horn. The building was 60 feet wide and a hundred feet long. The boards were all split from logs. One board he painted white and the next one red, so it was always known as the Striped Mill. It was run by an old-fashioned flutter wheel and mill race. Everything about the mill except the burrs, even the [cogs?], was made of wood. He paid his millwright eight to ten dollars a day, and ground all the way from ten to fifteen barrels of flour a day. They had to carry the wheat in, and flour out, over narrow muddy trails, and it was tough going.

The Indians were all around of course. One of the first things grandad did was to clear and fence the tract, some four or five acres, for garden truck. It was a split rail fence, and enclosing so small a tract, naturally didn't extend very far in any one direction, but it was, at that, too much fence for the Indians, or they thought it would be. The chief, old Chief [Quacicity?] of the Molallas, and some of his friends remonstrated. They did a little more. Every time grandad and Uncle Charlie, who was helping him, got their fence up a rail or two, the Indians would throw it down, pow-wowing all the time. Grandad didn't say anything [md] he didn't want to get in a fuss with them. Every time the Indians threw the rails down he and Uncle Charlie would, without a word, pick them up and put them back in place. Of course, he understood every word they said, and so did Uncle Charlie, who could talk jargon like any Indian. Finally Uncle Charlie told them his father didn't know what they were talking about, and neither did he. They stared at him in astonishment. He could talk but he couldn't understand their language. With a 3 disgusted "Ugh!" old Chief [Quacicity?] stalked off, his nonplussed braves following behind. I can remember old Chief [Quacicity?]. He was a big Indian, and he always wore ornaments in his nose. I used to

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play with the Indian boys when I was a little lad. All the Molallas seem to be gone. Old Indian Henry was the last one, and he died eight or nine years ago. The squaws used to take on awful when any of them died. They'd wail all day and all night after a death, trying to drive away the evil spirit, and when the Indians buried their dead they put everything the dead Indian owned in the grave with him.

The first place the immigrants stopped at after crossing the Cascade Mountains and coming down the dreaded and awful Laurel Hill (Barlow Road) where trees with big knots in them were used as brakes to hold the wagons and oxen back from destruction, was the old Foster farm, out on Foster Road. Philip Foster was one of the very earliest settlers in the Willamette Valley. The very next stopping place of the immigrants was grandfather's place.

Form D

Extra Comment

Federal Writers' Project

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Comment:

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The interviewer hoped to secure something in the way of folklore of early logging and lumbering days from Mr. Elliott, but he seemed to think there was nothing to tell, other than that "the men were a tough lot."